

# A Voice in the Wilderness

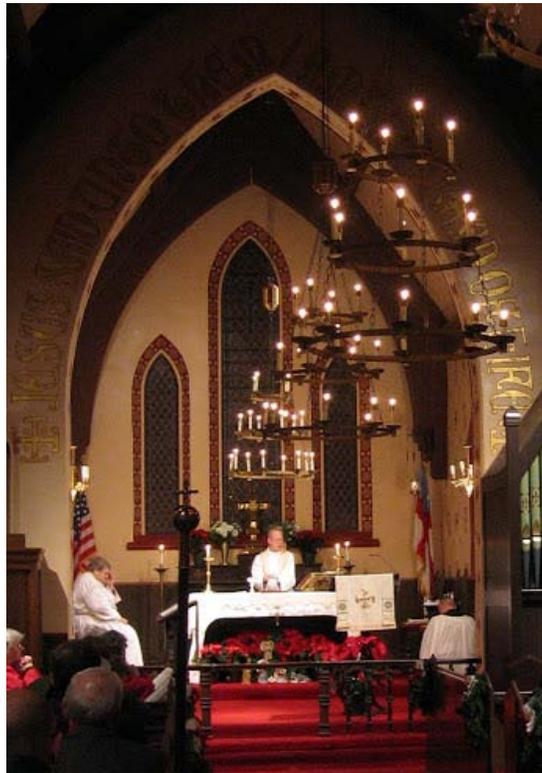
Newsletter of the Church of St. John in the Wilderness  
Copake Falls, New York  
January 2013

## Celebrating a great year at St. John's

### Thoughts from the Wilderness

We've had a great year at St. John in the Wilderness! I want to thank you all for your generous participation at St. John in the Wilderness in 2012.

There are many highlights of the joyful life and ministry that we share thanks to you, members and friends of St. John's. Members and friends have made our worship inspiring and beautiful (spiritually, musically, aesthetically), and generously given time, talent, and treasure in support of the many ministries and activities at and by St. John's. From our wonderful 160<sup>th</sup> Anniversary to another successful Country Fair and Auction (led by Elen Freeston) including the delicious Pork Barbecue (led by Bob and Karen Flynn) to Jazz Vespers to Winds in the Wilderness to Bake Sales to Copake Falls Day to Live Theater to Harvest Fest (led by Regina Shea) to the Hike and Bike Day with a Blessing of Animals, to Hand Bell Concerts to Winter Walk to Centering Prayer/Divine Reading Group to the ECW Christmas Luncheon, to Blue Christmas to the Candlelight Christmas Eve service, and more! All highlighted beautifully in our bulletins (done by Jane Peck and Mibs Zelley), parish newsletter (*A Voice in the Wilderness*, done by Dale and Louise Peterson), the media, and parish



Christmas 2012

website (Charley Musselman, webmaster) – and by our creative Stewardship Committee (leadership from Lucy Eldridge). We are also most grateful to our Choir/Music Ministry (led by Edee Hedrick), our Altar Guild (led by Elen Freeston), our Greeters, Ushers, Lectors, Eucharistic Ministers, and Acolytes (mainstays Harry Koepfel and David Chittick) and more! And thank you to all who participate in these important committees: Graveyard, Finance, Birthday and Memorial Candle Fund (led by Babs Croteau), and the Episcopal Church Women (with leadership from outgoing president Babs Croteau and new president Peggy Anderson).

We have been generous to those in need with: Thanksgiving Baskets, Christmas Baskets, and the Shoe Box Ministry (all with the leadership and support of the ECW), Christmas Friends (with leadership from Babs Croteau, Donna Platt and ECW), donations to our local Food Pantry (with leadership from Connie Valden), to United Thank Offering (chaired by Dorothy Baker) and to Episcopal Relief and Development, and more.

The Buildings and Grounds Committee (with leadership from outgoing chair Hank Croteau,

from Bob Callahan, and from new chair Dale Peterson) continue to do good work maintaining and improving our campus from Burke Hall to the Bell Tower project. Bob Callahan, Harry Garrett, Dale and Louise Peterson, Lucy Eldridge, and others work hard making our grounds and gardens beautiful. Wendy Langlois with help from Rebecca Garrard, Rosanne Persico, Regina Shea and Hope Hewlett provide Christian formation, love and fun for the increasing numbers of children coming to St. John's. And we are growing in general. Thanks go to everyone for all this and much more! Your hard work, high standards and prayers are greatly appreciated. And a special thanks to the Wardens, Vestry, treasurer and vestry clerk for their leadership across the board: Elen Freeston (Senior Warden), Karen Flynn (Junior Warden), vestry members Rebecca Garrard, Bob Callahan, Regina Shea, Dale Peterson, Jeannie VanHoesen, Mibs Zelle, and Steve Savarese, treasurer (Jane Peck), and vestry clerk (Marilyn Kay).

Thank you to the Rev. Walt Zelle for most ably filling in at the Eucharist and in pastoral care when I've been gone. And of course thanks to all who make our coffee hours times of friendly fellowship and delicious food for body and soul. Gary & Cathy Reinard have again graciously hosted bake sales for the benefit of St. John in the Wilderness at their KOA campground in 2012. Thank you to them and to all the bakers and supporters of this ministry.

There are so many people to be grateful for at St. John in the Wilderness; please consider yourself thanked if the committee you are on or ministry you are involved with has been mentioned

(celebrated!). If I've forgotten to thank anyone for anything please tell me so I can do so.

What we do together is fruitful because we are the body of Christ. We are Christ's hands and feet. I would love to see more of you at our Contemplative Prayer/Divine Reading Group Wednesdays, 3 PM at the rectory. Of course we can pray, read and study Scripture (and other inspired sources of wisdom) in our own homes—but it's good to be together.

We will again celebrate ERD Sunday the First Sunday in Lent, February 17<sup>th</sup>. Episcopal Relief and Development is a premiere relief and development organization. It is an international ministry of our own church. They (and we as we support them) alleviate hunger, create economic opportunity, fight disease, bring disaster relief and more.

We are planning an Ecumenical Lenten Soup and Bread Supper and series with the other Roe Jan churches on Wednesdays at 6:30 PM in Lent. St. John in the Wilderness will host Wednesday, February 27<sup>th</sup>. Details to come.

As we continue to pray, and share who we are, what we do and what we have (all God's gifts to us) with each other, and beyond, we are overcoming evil with good, and increasing God's reign of love in the world.

Thank you and peace,

*In peace,  
John+*

## A Voice in the Wilderness

Editors: Louise and Dale Peterson

Please send submissions including news of church members to [peterlouise@gmail.com](mailto:peterlouise@gmail.com)

Upcoming issues:

2013: *March 17, June 30, September 8, November 24*

*Please submit reports, articles and news items two weeks prior to the issue date. Thanks!*

## Portrait of Lucy Eldridge

We met Lucy Eldridge at her home in Ancram to talk about her life, her family and her many contributions to St. John in the Wilderness. Lucy has written many portraits of members of our parish family and it seemed right to learn more about her.

Lucy's childhood was in Cleveland and Lakewood, Ohio. In her early teens the family moved to New York City and she went off to Maine to attend boarding school for her junior and senior years of high school. Then she went west to Oakland, California, where she studied studio art and art history at Mills College, the women's college founded in 1852. Right out of college in 1962 she was married and in 1965 moved to Japan for a year to teach in an international school in Tokyo. Her return trip to the United States was a trip around the world with stops in southeast Asia, the Middle East and Europe. A highlight of the trip was a small plane journey to Angkor Wat, the 12<sup>th</sup> century Hindu temple in Cambodia.

Returning to the US, she lived in Boston where her children David and Sue were born. Her first museum job was at the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, as assistant to the Director of Education. Her family moved to Baltimore in 1969 and there she earned a Masters in Fine Art at Johns Hopkins University and worked as registrar at the Walters Art Gallery. The registrar keeps track of the museum's art and coordinates travel of these valuable objects when they are loaned to other libraries.

In 1981 her family moved to Bucks Country, Pennsylvania, where she worked first as a volunteer and later as the staff registrar at the Mercer Museum in Doylestown, staying there until 1989 when she moved to New York.



In New York Lucy worked first at the Brooklyn Historical Society on Pierrepont Street in Brooklyn Heights, and then for four years helped plan the Annual Fund at the Collegiate School in Manhattan. In 1995 she returned to museum work, becoming registrar at the Morgan Library and Museum. Lucy enjoyed her trips to Europe when she accompanied valuable works of art.

In 1993 she found a special house in Ancram, a Greek revival home needing lots of tender loving care. By 2006 the house had been fixed up and it became Lucy's retirement home. She looked around for a good church home and first came to St. John's for a Christmas Eve candlelight service. Lucy found at St John's a sense of community and a place for meditation.

Since arriving at our parish Lucy has been a leader in many ways. She was the chair of the Search Committee that brought Father John Thompson to Copake Falls from Alabama.

What's important to Lucy when she's not volunteering at St John's? She has five terrific grandchildren. Her son David and his wife Lisa live near Philadelphia and have three girls: Kate, Bethany and Jamie. Daughter Sue and her husband Seward are in New Jersey and have two daughters: Ruthann and Lucy. They all spend time together at holidays and at her family's long-time rustic cabin in Ontario.

Having served in many church roles, Lucy now quietly leads our Stewardship Committee and has found many creative ways to raise funds for the parish. She's a leader – sometimes out front and sometimes behind the scenes, but always contributing to our community.

*Louise and Dale Peterson*

## Internet notes

Here are two new ways to keep up to date with St John's on the internet:

Church calendar on the web. The calendar on the church website is now being kept up to date, so it's a good source for information on upcoming events. Go to [www.stjohnw.org](http://www.stjohnw.org) and click on Event Calendar. If you have an event that's not listed please contact Dale Peterson ([petersondale@gmail.com](mailto:petersondale@gmail.com)).

Facebook. We now have a Facebook page. Become a Friend at [facebook.com/stjohnwilderness](https://www.facebook.com/stjohnwilderness) and you'll get regular updates.

## ECW Report

At a brown bag supper meeting on Tuesday, October 2, 2012, the members of the Episcopal Church Women elected Peg Anderson as President, Jeanne VanHoesen as Vice President, Jane Peck as Treasurer, Marilyn Kay as Secretary, and Dorothy Baker as UTO Chairman. The members voted to

change the ECW's format from monthly afternoon meetings to quarterly evening meetings. Babs Croteau prepared envelopes for Christmas Friends collections, and Donna Platt shopped and wrapped the gifts. Susan Mollo and Connie Valden wrapped the Samaritan's Purse shoe boxes. At the Christmas Luncheon, which was attended by 27 men and women of the parish, a gift certificate was presented to Babs in thanks for her extraordinary dedication to the ECW and to St. John's.

Our next meeting will be held Tuesday, March 5th at 6:00 pm. Bring a brown bag supper. Coffee & tea will be served

## Annual meeting

At the Annual meeting on Sunday, January 20, new members of the Vestry were elected.

Rebecca Garrad is the new Junior Warden, and replacing her on the Vestry for the one year remaining on her term is Kent Kay. New to the Vestry for three year terms are Martha Glantz and Bob Dodd.



Christmas 2012

## Beyond Copake Falls

Epiphany finds a great deal going on in the Episcopal Church and the wider Anglican Communion. Here are mid-winter updates on several matters.

**The Communion.** The big news is, of course, the 31 December 2012 retirement of +++Rowan Williams as Archbishop of Canterbury and the selection of

+Justin Welby as his successor. +Welby, a graduate of Eton and Cambridge, worked in the oil industry for eleven years before seeking ordination in 1989. After serving in



Bishop Welby

several parishes and in posts at the cathedrals of Coventry and Liverpool, he became the Rt. Rev. the Lord Bishop of Durham in 2011. He will retain that title until 10 January, when the College of Canons will elect him Archbishop and the Dean of Canterbury will certify his election. He will be enthroned in Canterbury on 21 March. (It is unlikely that you noticed, but the Communion lacked an Archbishop for the first ten days of 2013.)

The new Archbishop of Canterbury comes from the evangelical wing of the Church of England. He supports the ordination of women bishops, which now seems to be a question of "when" rather than "whether." Although he opposes gay bishops and same sex marriage, he has told interviewers that he is willing to "rethink" his views on these issues. At a guess, his business experience – he has written on both economics and ethics – will make him more pragmatic than his predecessor.

**The Diocese(s) of South Carolina.** As I wrote in the November *Voice*, former Bishop Mark Lawrence and his Standing Committee have declared their independence of the Episcopal Church and have set up an entity that claims to be *the* Diocese of South Carolina. Thirty five of the 71 South Carolina parishes and missions, including the cathedral, have followed Lawrence and declared themselves "not in Union with the [diocesan]

Convention." About a third of canonically resident clergy have expressed their intention to do likewise, though few have in fact done so. The breakaway "diocese" has its own website (*diosc.com*), the blessing of the Global South primates, and even a "Visiting Bishop for Anglican Communion Relationships," former Church of England Bishop Michael Nazir-Ali.

On the other side of the widening split in South Carolina stand 16 parishes that have affirmed their commitment to the Episcopal Church as the Continuing Episcopal Diocese of South Carolina (*episcopaldioceseofsc.org*). In addition, at least five "worshiping communities," totaling some 250 to 300 persons, have been organized by Episcopal loyalists whose parishes have defected with Lawrence.

On 25 and 26 January, the Continuing Diocese will convene at Grace Episcopal Church in Charleston to elect a new Bishop and Standing Committee. Presiding Bishop Katharine Jefferts Schori will attend that special convention. The experience of other fractured dioceses – e.g. Pittsburgh, San Joaquin, and Fort Worth -- suggests that the Continuing Diocese will grow once the wider Church's commitment to it becomes absolutely clear.



Grace Church  
Charleston

While South Carolina's Episcopal loyalists are working to rebuild their historic diocese, Lawrence and his followers are trying to block them. On 4 January, they initiated a \$500 million lawsuit to prevent what their website describes as a "blatant land grab" as TEC seeks control of Diocesan holdings and parishes." Given that the courts have found for the Episcopal Church in almost all such cases, Lawrence's suit is likely to do no more than bleed the dissident parishes and TEC and add venom where no more is needed. Is this what Christ died for?

**Albany Via Media.** Fifty members and friends of Albany Via Media met at St. Paul’s Church, Albany, on 8 December for the organization’s ninth Annual Meeting. Our speaker, Bishop Skip Adams of the Diocese of Central New York, spoke eloquently about the challenges of being faithful in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century. He showed us why two parishes – St. Andrew’s, Albany, and St. George’s, Schenectady – are delighted that he is pastoring them under DEPO and why at least one other Albany parish would like to be under his wing.

DEPO (Delegated Episcopal Pastoral Oversight) was designed to give conservative parishes “stranded” in liberal dioceses access to a bishop of similar mind. Albany’s four progressive DEPO parishes are the first in the Episcopal Church, and they have been received warmly by their mentors and host dioceses: Bp. Skip (Central NY) and Bp. Thomas Ely (Vermont). At least two more progressive parishes are considering DEPO as I write this

Marya and I decided not to stand for reelection at the Annual Meeting, having been on the Board for all of AVM’s history; another “old-timer” made the same decision. As luck would have it, all of our replacements – Fr. Paul Blanch, David Kennison, and Virginia Manning – are from St. George’s, Schenectady, a parish whose former rector helped found AVM in 2003. St. George’s has had no representative on the Board since Fr.



Bishop Adams

McSwain left, so we rejoice to see this vibrant, progressive parish back in the game!

When I left the Board on 8 December, I automatically ceased to be its president but there seemed to be no willing successor. I shared my concern about that with Bp. Adams as we walked out of St. Paul’s after the Annual Meeting. “I’m not sure they can play without a conductor the way the NBC Symphony did after Arturo Toscanini died.” +Skip laughed. “Let me understand,” he said, “you think you’re Toscanini?”

I needn’t have worried. When Marya and I arrived a few minutes late for the Board’s first meeting of 2013, they had already elected a president and were in hot pursuit of a VP. Barbara Wisnom of St. Andrews, whose son, Dennis, is our faithful Secretary, will preside. She brings a lifetime of experience, energy, and executive skills to the job. Our new Vice President is Fr. Paul Blanch, Rector of St. George’s, Schenectady, a British import who is both very high church and a committed, energetic progressive. With John White of St. Andrews continuing as Treasurer and Dennis Wisnom as Secretary, the Board and AVM are in excellent hands.

Marya and I have agreed to continue editing *Open Minds*, the AVM newsletter. We shall also, I hope, keep contributing to *A Voice*....

*Robert Dodd*

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## Book Review

Marcus J. Borg (2011), *Speaking Christian : Why Christian Words Have Lost Their Meaning and Power and How They Can Be Restored*

This very readable book, which the author describes as a ‘Christian primer’, helps us read Christian language without the misunderstandings that have developed over the centuries. It explains what literalization of the Bible and a “heaven and hell” framework for Christianity have done to the

meanings of the words we Christians use. Have you ever asked , “Just what is meant by ‘Salvation’, or ‘Redemption’, or “Born Again”. What is God like? Is ‘He’ loving, forgiving, tolerant. Or is ‘He’ judgmental, cruel, demanding, and fearsome. Do you have problems with the Creeds? What is The Rapture?

Each chapter deals with a particular element of Christian language and shows the reader how mistakes have crept into Christian language over the years. In our contemporary world it is hard to

accept some things in the Church as factual or 'true'. Literalization of the Bible and other aspects of Christian usage have changed meanings. Most of us grew up believing that Jesus died for our sins so that we can be forgiven and go to heaven if we believe in him. It all seemed to be about being bad and trying to escape eternal punishment by believing in Jesus who died to erase our sins and forgive us. This substitutionary atonement is hard for many of us to accept. It is part of what the author calls "the heaven and hell framework" for modern Christianity. Most Christians today believe that this is about being saved from sin, but words like savior, salvation, redeemer and redemption, in their ancient meanings, are about freedom from slavery not being saved from sin.

Another word that takes on a different and deeper meaning is *faith*, which does not mean acceptance of the truth of statements but means loyalty and allegiance to God in Jesus. The

author's best and, to me, most surprising synonym was *belove* for believe. If the language that we use as Christians has come to confuse people and even to drive some out of the Church, what can be done to change this? Marcus Borg proposes to *redeem* Christian language - to set it free from the contemporary usage that has robbed it of the biblical meanings that originated in a different time and place. This includes words heard in Christian worship, the Bible, liturgies, the Lord's Prayer and especially the Eucharist - the ways, in writing and speech, that the Holy Spirit speaks to us.

*Marya Dodd*

*Among the books in my library, including other works by Marcus Borg and four years of Education for Ministry texts, this volume has been the most helpful in clarifying terms which we use in church all the time and sometimes find puzzling. I recommend it.*



Our 160<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebration in June 2012

## Events in the Wilderness

Ash Wednesday, February 13.

Saturday, February 16, 5:00 pm. Valentine's Day dinner.

Sunday, February 17. First Sunday in Lent. Episcopal Relief and Development Sunday.

Wednesday, February 20, 6:30 pm. Ecumenical Soup and Bread Supper. Our Lady of Hope, 8074 State Rte 22, Copake Falls. With a special presentation of "The Way of the Cross in the Company of Clowns"

Wednesday, February 27, 6:30 pm. Ecumenical Soup and Bread Supper. St. John in the Wilderness, 261 Route 344, Copake Falls.

Wednesday, March 6, 6:30 pm. Ecumenical Soup and Bread Supper. Copake Park Building, 305

Mountain View Road, Copake. Hosted by the people of West Copake Reformed Church.

Wednesday, March 13, 6:30 pm. Ecumenical Soup and Bread Supper. St. John's Lutheran Church, 1277 County Route 7, Ancram,

Wednesday, March 20, 6:30 pm. Ecumenical Soup and Bread Supper. Copake Park Building, 305 Mountain View Road, Copake. Hosted by the people of the Methodist Churches.

Maundy Thursday, March 28.

Good Friday, March 29.

Saturday, March 30. Easter egg hunt. Details to be announced.

Easter Sunday, March 31.

## Weekly events

Sunday. 8:00 am, Spoken Eucharist. 10:00 am Choral Eucharist. Sunday school at 10:00 am.

Wednesday, 3:00 pm. Divine Reading / Contemplative Prayer Group.

### A Voice in the Wilderness

Newsletter of the  
Church of St. John in the Wilderness  
(Episcopal)  
Copake Falls, New York

The Rev. John Thompson, Rector

Karen Flynn, Sr. Warden  
Rebecca Garrard, Jr. Warden

#### *Vestry*

Robert Dodd Dale Peterson  
Martha Glantz Regina Shea  
Kent Kay Jeanne Van Hoesen  
Marilyn Kay, Clerk of the Vestry  
Jane Peck, Treasurer

#### *Eucharists*

Sunday, 8:00 AM (spoken)  
Sunday, 10:00 AM (choral)

[www.stjohnw.org](http://www.stjohnw.org)  
[www.facebook.com/stjohnwilderness](http://www.facebook.com/stjohnwilderness)  
518 329-3674

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year at St. John's**